

**Board of Conservation and Recreation
April 29, 2004
Lake Anna State Park, Visitor's Center
Spotsylvania, Virginia**

Board of Conservation and Recreation Members Present

Alan D. Albert, Chair
J. Benjy Burnett
Joy A. Cooley
Ted Drake
Stephen Murray

David G. Brickley
Gerald Connolly
Linda Crandell
Richard Formato

Board of Conservation and Recreation Members Not Present

Gwen Mason
Sheryl D. Swinson

Susan Swecker

Staff Present

Joseph H. Maroon
Michael R. Fletcher
Douglas Graham

Leon E. App
Scott Gagnon
Thomas Smith

Others Present

Gail Martin, Lake Anna Observer Newspaper
W. Bruce Wingo

Call to Order

Chairman Albert called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Mr. Brickley moved that the minutes of the January 8, 2004 meeting be approved as submitted.

SECOND: Mr. Murray.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Overview of Lake Anna State Park

Park Manager Douglas Graham gave an overview of Lake Anna State Park. He noted that a tour would be provided following the meeting.

Lake Anna State Park is a 2,300 acre park with 8 ½ miles of shoreline. The park opened in 1983. Lake Anna was built by Virginia Power to cool the Lake Anna Nuclear Power station. The lake filled with Hurricane Agnes in 1972. The park has about 100,000 visitors a year.

The cabins are the first of the General Obligation Bond projects to be completed and are at this point 80% complete. There will be boat slips with each cabin.

It took about a week to open park roads after Hurricane Isabel. The biggest impact was on the cabin area. Due to the loss of trees the area will be more open than originally designed.

Director's Report

Mr. Maroon gave a summary of legislation pertaining to the Department. He noted that, at the time of the meeting, the General Assembly was in final negotiations on the budget.

A copy of the legislative summary is attached as Attachment #1.

Mr. Maroon noted that parks are still recovering from the hurricane. Damage was estimated between \$9-10 million. All parks are now re-opened. Remnants of the damage are still visible.

We have been asked to host a workshop in Southside on the Rails to Trails projects. We are hopeful that the Governor will be a keynote speaker.

We are very pleased to say that, for the first time in our collective memory the Department has received a completely clean audit report.

At this point State Parks have seen a 7% increase in attendance over this point last year. Total reservations are up 29% from last year. Cabin rentals are up 4%. Camping reservations are up 18%.

Finally, the Department is working to strengthen the department's identity with the public.

Presentation to W. Bruce Wingo

Mr. Albert welcomed W. Bruce Wingo, former chair of the Board of Conservation and Recreation for a presentation. Mr. Albert recognized Mr. Wingo's more than 16 years of work on behalf of conservation and recreation resources in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Albert and Mr. Maroon presented a signed and framed copy of the resolution adopted by the Board at its January meeting. The text of that resolution is included in the minutes of January 8, 2004.

Mr. Maroon also presented Mr. Wingo with an engraved gavel and a lifetime pass to Virginia State Parks.

Mr. Drake presented a framed copy of House Joint Resolution 373 of the 2004 General Assembly honoring Mr. Wingo for his service. The Resolution was introduced by Delegate Thelma Drake and passed overwhelmingly.

Mr. Wingo expressed his appreciation for the recognitions.

Regulatory Actions

Mr. App noted that Board action was needed to allow the department to bring the Regulatory Public Participation Procedures up to date. Members were provided this information at the January meeting.

A suggested motion was moved by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Burnett. After no discussion the motion carried unanimously.

A signed final version of the motion is on file at the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Natural Heritage Report

Mr. Smith gave an overview of the Natural Heritage Program.

Virginia has a rich diversity of life with 2,546 native plant species, 737 native vertebrate species, and 3,338 native plants, vertebrates and select invertebrates.

Natural Heritage represents the first comprehensive attempt to identify the most significant natural areas in VA through an inventory of plants, animals, and natural communities.

Natural Heritage is part of an International Network of Natural Heritage Programs. The network helps inform decisions we make as Virginians, and helps carry our efforts and information to conservation decision makers throughout the western hemisphere.

Mr. Smith gave an overview of the Virginia Conservation Lands database located at <http://www.dcr.state.va.us/dnh/conslandmap.htm>

Ms. Crandall noted that the mapping would be most beneficial in working with local government. She said that it was excellent information regarding stewardship.

Mr. Albert asked Mr. Smith to explain the assistance provided to a landowner in the event a rare species is located on someone's property.

Mr. Smith said that there are two protection tools. First is the natural area registry. Homeowners get limited technical assistance. Second is the natural area preserve deed of dedication. That provides for additional technical assistance.

Mr. Smith provided members with the Precious Heritage report and poster.

State Parks Project Funds

Mr. Fletcher presented the project status report. (A Copy is attached as Attachment #2).

Staff made the following recommendations:

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|-----------------|---|
| Project # 02-04 | Sky Meadows, portable radios
Recommend close and return balance of \$319.14 to park unallocated funds. |
| Project #02-06 | Guest/Shenandoah River, Kubota tractor
Recommend close and return balance of \$405.00 to park unallocated funds. |
| Project #02-25 | Grayson Highlands, outdoor flagpole
Recommend close and return balance of \$64.48 to park unallocated funds. |
| Project #04-08 | Wilderness Road, computer purchase.
Recommend close and return balance of \$1.00 to park unallocated funds. |
| MOTION: | Mr. Connolly moved that the Board recommend to the Director the approval of the recommended staff actions. |

SECOND: Ms. Crandell

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Fletcher presented the following projects for Board endorsement.

Project #04-09	Bear Creek Lake	\$500.00
	Digital camera/equipment	Park unallocated funds

Project #04-10	Grayson Highlands	\$500.00
	Trail Shelter on Stamper Branch	Park unallocated funds
	Trail	

MOTION: Mr. Connolly moved that the Board recommend to the Director approval of the park projects.

SECOND: Ms. Crandell

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

State Park Master Plans

Mr. Maroon noted that the Board's role in the Master Plan process was one of advising the director on the final approval of the plan for the parks. The plans are a comprehensive plan for future development in the parks in three or four phases over a 10 year period.

Plans are being readied for the following parks: York River, Holliday Lake; Westmoreland and Twin Lakes.

Mr. Maroon invited members to participate in the advisory committee process for the park master plans. Ms. Crandall and Mr. Brickley are participating in the Westmoreland Advisory Committee. Sherry Swinson is on the Twin Lakes Committee.

Mr. Albert noted that he thought it best if Board members participated in an ex officio non-voting capacity.

At this time the Board recessed for lunch. Lunch was provided by the Virginia Association for Parks and Friends of Lake Anna State Park. At the lunch, members heard from Johnny Finch with the Virginia Association for Parks and from Jo Finch with the Friends of Lake Anna.

Recreational Access Roads

Mr. Davy presented a request to designate a small access road in Loudoun County as a recreational access road. The road has already been approved by VDOT. This road will provide access to the town's new community center.

Mr. Murray clarified that this designation would not require funds from DCR.

Mr. Davy said that the DCR director is required to designate the road as a public area, but that all funding is through VDOT.

MOTION: Mr. Drake moved that the Board of Conservation and Recreation accept the access road proposal as presented by the staff and that the Board recommend to the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation that action be taken to designate the Carver Recreation Center in the Town of Purcelleville and Loudoun County as a public recreational area and that the Commonwealth Transportation Board provide Recreational Access Road Funds for this public facility.

SECOND: Mr. Connolly.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

General Obligation Bond

Mr. Davy gave an update on the 2002 General Obligation Bond. The Bond provided \$119 million for parks and was approved by 69% of the vote. This includes \$36.5 million for land acquisition – land for 3 new state parks, additions to 11 existing parks, 10 new natural area preserves and additions to 8 existing preserves. Also included is \$4.5 million to protect park land from severe shoreline erosion and \$78 million for much needed construction, improvement, trails and repair projects throughout Virginia's State Park System.

Mr. Maroon noted that the department has 34 state parks and land for one new one. Land for a new park along the James River in Powhatan has been transferred to DCR from the Beaumont Juvenile Correction Center.

Mr. Davy noted that DCR is the largest manager of buildings in state government.

The bonds are very specific and tied into specific projects. Money cannot be easily moved between projects.

Other Business

Mr. Albert noted that the Board was to have a discussion on fund raising, but that he recommended that discussion be held off until the staff can put together a briefing package about the potential for a fund raising mechanism.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Next Meeting

The next meeting had originally been scheduled for Tuesday, June 15. Consensus among members was to move that meeting until later in July. Staff will poll board members for the best option on the date.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan D. Albert
Chairman

Joseph H. Maroon
Recording Secretary